



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Park Service News Release

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Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective September 17, 2013

BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Acting Superintendent Lisa Etherington announced today that a **13-knot vessel speed limit in mid-Glacier Bay will be implemented** due to a shift in whale distribution into an area of regular vessel traffic. This change goes into effect beginning at **5AM Tuesday September 17th**. Whale waters restrictions in Whidbey Passage and Lower Glacier Bay remain unchanged. The attached map shows the boundaries of all current whale waters in Glacier Bay. All Glacier Bay whale waters restrictions will expire at 11:59pm on September 30 unless otherwise announced.

As shown on the attached map, the new mid-Bay whale waters are defined by the following boundaries:

- Northern boundary: a line drawn from the northern tip of Lone Island to the northern tip of Sturgess Island.
- Eastern boundary: a line drawn from the northern tip of Sturgess Island to the southern tip of South Marble Island.
- Southern boundary: a line drawn from the southern tip of South Marble Island to the northern tip of Willoughby Island, making it contiguous with the current Whidbey Passage whale waters.
- Western boundary: a line from the northern tip of Willoughby Island, to the southern tip of Francis Island, and from the northern tip of Francis Island to the southern tip of Drake Island, and then along shore to the northern tip of Drake Island such that the area encompasses the eastern shores of Drake and Francis Islands. From the northern tip of Drake Island, the boundary follows a line to the northernmost point of the Marble Mountain peninsula at the southern entrance of Geikie Inlet, making it contiguous with the current Whidbey Passage whale waters.

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The 13-knot speed limit for all vessels in **Whidbey Passage whale waters remains unchanged.**

Vessels greater than 18 feet in length are restricted to a course one nautical mile from shore (or mid-channel in narrower passages) in Whidbey Passage. As described in detail in the [August 8th press release](#), these restrictions apply throughout Whidbey Passage but exclude the inner waters of Berg Bay and Fingers Bay.

[Since the August 30th press release](#), in Lower Glacier Bay there is a 20 knot speed limit, and vessels greater than 18 feet in length are restricted to a course one nautical mile offshore (or mid-channel in narrower passages).

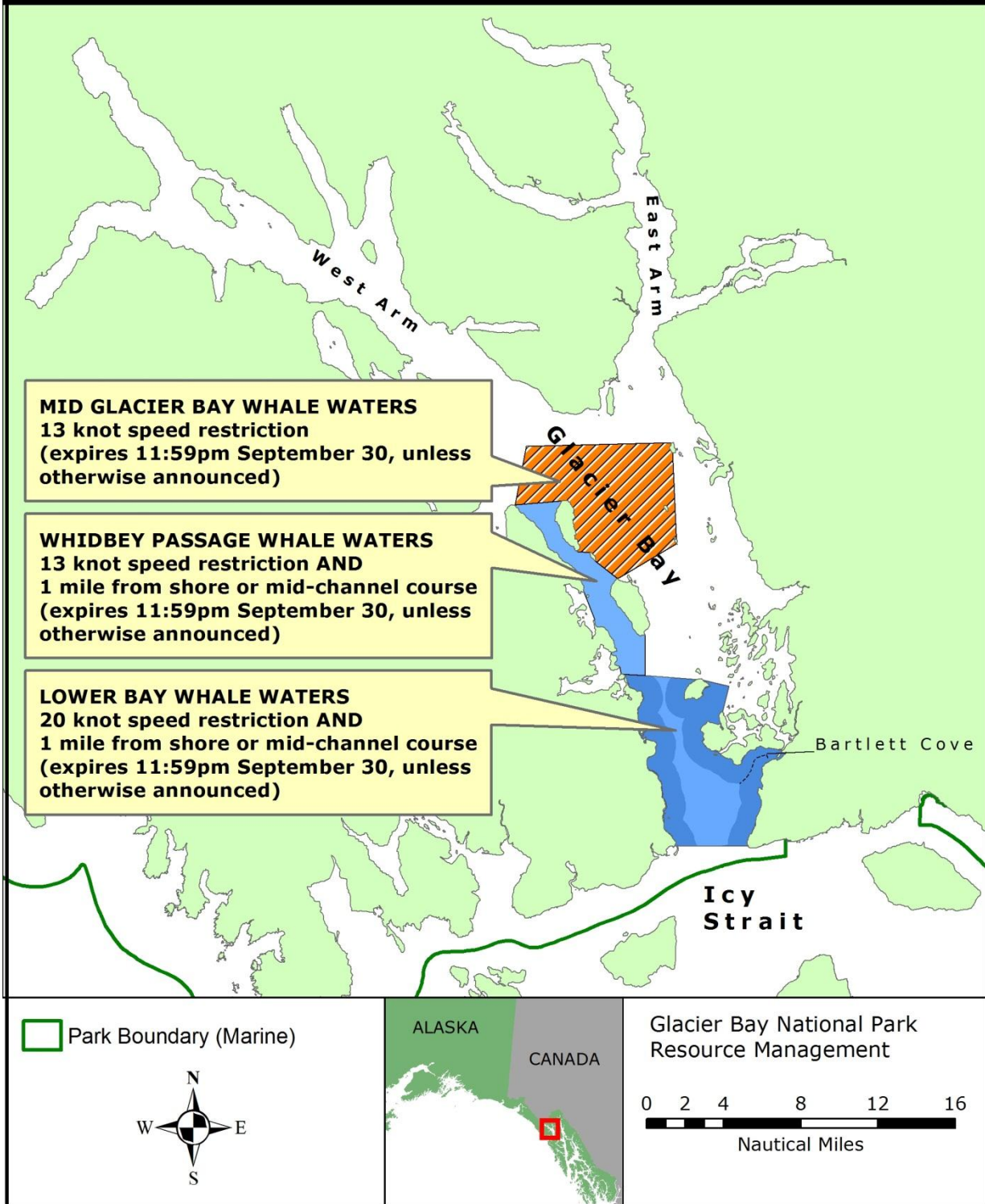
Numerous whales are feeding throughout mid-Glacier Bay. Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Vessels are prohibited from operating within ¼ nautical mile of a humpback whale in Park waters, including those Park waters outside Glacier Bay proper.

Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907) 697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine VHF radio.

Whale Waters in Glacier Bay

Effective September 17, 2013

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